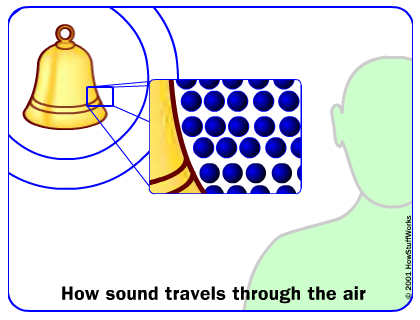
**How Sound Travels**

Modified from Jonathan Strickland

Sound travels in **waves**. These waves move and transport energy from one place to another through **matter**. Matter can be a solid, liquid or a gas. To make sound, waves **vibrate** an object.

Let's take a look at an example. Imagine a church bell. When a bell rings, it vibrates, which means the bell moves inward and outward very **rapidly**. As the bell moves outward, it pushes against **particles** of air. Particles are tiny little pieces of air. Those air particles then push against other air particles, and so on. As the bell moves inward, it pulls against the other air particles, and they, in turn, pull against other air particles. This push and pull pattern is a **sound wave**. The vibrating bell is the source of the sound, and the air particles are how sound travels to the recipient.

Sound doesn’t only move through the air. Press your ear against a solid surface like a table and close your eyes. Tell someone else to tap his or her finger on the other end of the table. The tapping becomes the source of the sound. Each tap sends vibrations through the table. The particles in the table bump into each other and travel from the source of the sound through the table. The particles in the table bump into other air particles between the table and your **eardrum**.

So, sound can travel from the source of the sound through the three types of matter: solids, liquids and gases to the recipient of the sound.

Modified by Anela Deisler from: Can humans hear in space? by [Jonathan Strickland](http://science.howstuffworks.com/jonathan-strickland-author.htm)<http://science.howstuffworks.com/humans-hear-in-space1.htm>